326 Whereas with us the village inn is the place where the affairs of
521 the week are noisily debated, it is at the smithy where the Mongo
571 Negroes congregate. There the elders gather -- the younger men have no voice here; there the various differences about (or among) wives and the impending taxes are discussed; amidst the billows of smoke -- drawn with deep puffs out of their huge bamboo pipes -- the smith is the only one who works on and earns his living nobly.

326 The smith is the most judicious craftsman among the Mongo
428 Negroes.

His trade is practically the only one which is a family affair and is passed on from father to son. If a smith does not have any children, the business is taken over by his younger brother.

This right of inheritance is by no means general in the other trades; the trade of the smith is inherited while the others are taken up by any Tom, Dick, or Harry who happens to have a liking for them.

325 The smithy where the smith plies his trade is a wide oblong dark
348 hut (about five meters by ten meters) built alongside the public highway. In contrast with the other dwellings of the Negroes, the floors of which are generally built about 20 centimeters above the road, the floor of the smithy is dug out from 30 to 70 centimeters below the level of the road so that one goes down a step from the road into the smithy.

The reason why the floor of the smithy should be dug out in this way is not quite clear to me, but most probably it is to prevent the danger of fire when the storm winds that accompany the heavy tropical rains sweep through the huts. By digging out the floor in this way, an earthen enclosure about half a meter high is formed around the smithy, and this protects the smith from the wind and enables him to continue quietly at work.

325 In spite of the primitiveness of his tools [95] and the primitive manipulation of them, the smith knows how to get what he needs from his implements. The forge (lotulu) is constructed as follows: a block of wood is cut about 60 centimeters long, 40 centimeters wide, and 30 centimeters high, with a hollow pipe, half a meter long, connected to it. This is all formed of one piece. With the aid of a banana stalk, on which the clay is moulded, a smith's pipe is formed. The banana stalk is removed from the clay, and the hollow pipe (boongo) remains. Two, sometimes four, bellows (njasa) are placed on the